

Mental Ability - 1932

NEW YORK TIMES

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TEMPEST STIRRED IN VIRGINIA TEAPOT

Englishwoman Said "Natives"
Had No Mentality and Trouble
Followed Quickly.

SHE EXPLAINED REMARKS

But Controversy Still Rages and
Visitor From the North Adds
to the Unrest.

By VIRGINIUS DABNEY.

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RICHMOND, April 14.—A lively
and at times acrimonious contro-
versy has arisen over a remark made
by an Englishwoman in an address
to a literary club near London, and
the newspapers, particularly those
in Richmond, are being flooded with
indignant communications.

Mrs. Edith Leeson Everett, a por-
trait painter who was born in Eng-
land and but who married a Virginian
and lived in Richmond for two dec-
ades, spoke on Virginia recently
before the Twickenham Literary So-
ciety. The Thames Valley Times
quoted her as saying that in the Old
Dominion "the natives have no
mentality." Somebody sent a copy
of the paper to The Richmond News-
Leader, and that journal published
an account of Mrs. Everett's re-
marks with unfavorable editorial
comment.

When friends of Mrs. Everett ad-
vised her of this, she cabled at once
that she had not referred to the
white population of Virginia but
merely to the Negroes. She ex-
plained that she had used the word
"natives" as it is used in England,
where the custom of describing all
dark-skinned races as "natives" is
widespread, owing to the almost
universal use of the term in the colo-
nies.

But although The News-Leader
promptly apologized to Mrs. Everett
and there is a considerable disposi-
tion to accept her explanation, a
fairly large number of white citizens
appear to feel, despite her dis-
claimer, that she had Virginians of
Caucasian descent in mind. Others
take the view that even if her ex-
planation is correct, her statement
was a gratuitous insult to the Negro
race, and one Negro wrote to a Rich-
mond paper saying:

"Whatever may have prompted her
address, whatever may have inspired

her motives, however deeply humili-
ated native Virginians may feel, it
is perfectly clear to any sane mind
that Mrs. Everett's utterances, how-
ever disrespectful, insulting and con-
temptuous, were directed at the
white people of Richmond and Vir-
ginia and not at the Negroes."

Northerner Adds Fuel to Fire.

A veritable rash of letters to the
editor has broken out during the
past week, and one from a Northern-
er, sojourning in Richmond, started
a brand-new controversy by finding
fault with Mrs. Everett for not say-
ing that the majority of Southerners
have no mentality.

"It is surely refreshing to visit
friends up North or have them come
down here," this correspondent de-
clared in a communication to The
Richmond Times-Dispatch. "Then
I can hear decent English and as-
sociate with people who aren't igno-
rant. As for 'Southern hospitality'
and 'Southern gentlemen,' they must
have gone north. I haven't met
either since I have been down here."

This letter writer has been strongly
advised by other correspondents to
go back where he came from. At
the same time, Thomas Lomax

Hunter, Times-Dispatch columnist,
offered the following comment:

"It is quite conceivable that a man
may stay for a long time in Virginia
and not come into intimate contact
with people of culture and refine-
ment. There are more ways than
one of looking at this matter. For
my part I should hate to publish
the fact that I had been for a long
time in any corner of the United
States and that I had never met any
of the best people. I should feel that
to be a reflection not on the best
people but on me. A gentleman no-
where has trouble in meeting gentle-
men; pot likker finds its own level."

Mrs. Everett Returning.

The controversy is warming up to
such an extent and developing so
many angles that it threatens to
equal a famous rumpus of a few
years ago, occasioned by a letter to
one of the Richmond papers in
which Robert E. Lee was termed a
"scoundrel." The author of this
communication, a New England wo-
man, was swamped with communica-
tions from all over the State and
ended by offering apologies.

Mrs. Everett is in no danger in so
far as Robert E. Lee is concerned,
however, for one of the defenses of-
fered by her friends is that she could
not have intended to say the white-
citizens of Virginia have no mental-
ity since her tremendous admiration
for Lee would preclude this. She is
quoted as having described the Con-
federate commander as "the most
perfect type of gentleman" and it is
stated that she had cabled to Rich-
mond for pictures of him, in order
that she might exhibit them before
the Twickenham Literary Society.
Her friends say, too, that she is
planning to return to the Old Domin-
ion and to rear her daughter here
"as a Virginian."

NOW SAYS THAT MENTAL TRAITS NOT JUST RACIAL Environment More Important Than One's Color

WASHINGTON, D. C.—Thomas
Russell Garth, white, professor of
experimental psychology at the Uni-
versity of Denver, has reversed the
opinion held in his early investiga-
tion, and expressed the definite con-
clusion here last week that there is
no racial difference whatever in
mental traits and that such differ-
ences, as mental tests reveal, are due
entirely to environmental conditions
and education.

In discussing the subject in a lec-
ture at Howard University, the
speaker presented popular, unpopu-
lar, and theoretical, views, showing
the effect of prejudice and tradition
in these conclusions.

Environment Tells

While admitting environmental
factors cannot be controlled, they are
not to be disregarded any more than
we disregard gravity because of our
inability to control it.

Concerning the question of what
Professor Garth took the po-
sition that neither he nor anyone
else could offer an adequate defini-
tion. It is a question that even
baffles the anthropologists. He
quoted Hadden as saying, "Race is
but an artificial concept."

Personality, according to the
speaker, is the result of modification
through environmental influences.
The professor said that the reason
that art passes freely from one race
to another is that it is universal,
with principles that are utterly un-
affected by racial contact.

Debunks Intelligence Tests

Professor Garth told of color
preference tests conducted among
various races, with a result that the
young of all races like the same
colors, and preferences for different
environmental influences or education.
It was also contended that there is
no difference between the races in
musical talents.

The lecture was illustrated by
slides, showing the investigations
upon which the conclusion of racial
equality in mental traits is based.

Professor Garth is author of a
book on "Race Psychology," pub-
lished by McGraw-Hill Company,
1931, which is regarded as the most
work on the subject.

WHITES AROUSED BY SHAW STATEMENT OF BLACKS' SUPERIORITY

Conceal

CAPETOWN, South, Africa, Apr. 15.—
(CNS)—When George Bernard
Shaw, English playwright, told the
newspapermen that African natives
were "far more intelligent than
their white neighbors in South Af-
rica" just before he sailed for
home, he aroused the ire of the
white population of the colony.

Prominent white citizens, irritat-
ed by the sharp and witty com-
parison drawn by the Englishman
declared that Shaw would have
been shot, had he remained in
South Africa after the statement.

Race Child Is Bright

INTELLIGENCE TEST IS 104 IN N. Y.—VARY WITHIN THE RACE—
NO PROOF OF RACIAL DIFFER-
ENCE— FORMER TESTS UN-
FAIR

New York, N. Y., Aug. 8, 1932.—In-
telligence tests of colored children in
New York, made in a study soon to
be published, showed an average in-
telligence quotient of 104. Dr. Albert
Sidney Beckham, clinical psychologist
of the Institute for Juvenile Research
disclosed today. The average intelli-
gence quotient for everybody is 100.
All the children examined were be-
tween the ages of 12 and 16.

Dr. Beckham holds that no indisputa-
ble evidence has been found for racial
differences in intelligence, but that the
new tests show evidence of the advan-
tages of nurture, education and favor-
able environment in improving intelli-
gence.

Previous intelligence tests of colored
children have been unfair, he holds in
an article appearing in the current issue
of Opportunity.

"In a study that is soon to be pub-
lished," he writes, "concerning the in-
telligence of colored children from the
favorable environments of New York
city, Baltimore, Maryland and Wash-
ington, D. C., the following I. Q.'s were
obtained. All these children were be-
tween the ages of 12 and 16:

In N. Y., Baltimore, D. of C.

"The New York mean was 104, with
a range from 75 to 122. The total
number of children measured in New
York was 100. In Washington the
mean was 97, with a range from 50
to 139. The number of children meas-
ured in the District of Columbia was
753.

"In Baltimore 147 children were
measured with a mean I. Q. of 95 and
a range from 64 to 120.

"This study indicates the advantage
of nurture. It proves conclusively, at
least as far as this group is concerned,

that individual difference intelligence
within the same race is more important
and more obvious than intelligence dif-
ferences between the races. The study
reveal that socio-economic status is
significant in evaluating the intelligence
of any group.

Heretofore Important

"Most of the testing results thus far
reported have been decidedly unfair
to the colored child.

"First of all, the psychologists mak-
ing the investigations have been white
newspapermen that African natives
were 'far more intelligent' than
their white neighbors in South Af-
rica" just before he sailed for
home, he aroused the ire of the
white population of the colony.

Prominent white citizens, irritat-
ed by the sharp and witty com-
parison drawn by the Englishman
declared that Shaw would have
been shot, had he remained in
South Africa after the statement.

"Racial investigations of intelligence
should compare groups of children in
both races who have had identical
social and educational influences"